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FM USEU BRUSSELS

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO RUEHDL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY

RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY

RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 000503

NOFORN

SIPDIS

STATE FOR IO/RHS, DRL/MLGA, EUR/ERA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2019

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: HRC: EU "THRILLED" ABOUT U.S. CANDIDACY

REF: STATE 31175

Classified By: CDA Chris Davis for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶11. (C) Poloff delivered reftel points on the U.S. candidacy for a seat on the Human Rights Council (HRC) to Riina Kionka, High Representative Solana's Personal Representative for Human Rights on April 1. She said that this news was "incredibly positive," and lightheartedly asked if the USG realized how much work we had ahead of us once we were elected to the Council.

The Reality of EU HRC Coordination

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¶12. (C//NF) When asked if the EU would support the U.S. candidacy (the day before New Zealand withdrew) Kionka said that EU policy in the HRC was coordinated differently than EU policy in the UN's third committee. Elaborating, she confided that she expected we would have the support of all 27 EU Member States, but that since the UK blocks EU-level coordination on voting and resolutions at the HRC (unlike in the UN Third Committee), the Czech EU Presidency - acting for the EU - would be unable to lobby on our behalf or publicly support the U.S. candidacy.

Clean Slate: EU Concerned About Hypocrisy

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¶13. (C//NF) Kionka volunteered that the the Western group could undermine its principled stance against slate management if New Zealand withdrew as expected (reftel demarche was delivered the day before New Zealand's announcement) in order to allow for an uncontested slate of candidates. The EU has long had such a "principled stand" against other regional groups running managed slates. She anticipated the Council Human Rights Working Group (COHOM) would have to re-evaluate the EU's position on the slate issue, and said that she had directed her staff to start combing through their public statements and speeches to see what the EU had said about other regional groups running managed slates.

¶14. (C//NF) Comment: Kionka did not want her comments attributed to her, but the implication was that we needed to lobby London if we felt coordinated EU-level support was important for our candidacy. She was clearly frustrated by the UK's longstanding blocking position on HRC voting coordination, and intimated that the UK may be persuaded to make an exception to their general objection for this specific purpose. End comment.

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